STAR ALLIANCE, NEC AND SITA SIGN TEAMING AGREEMENT, PAVING THE WAY TO EXPAND TOUCHLESS JOURNEYS ACROSS MEMBER AIRLINES

News / Airlines

Passengers will soon be able to use their biometric ID as their boarding pass across a vast network of airlines and airports. Frequent flyer program customers of Star Alliance member airlines will soon be able to use their biometric identity across any participating airline at any participating airport following a new agreement between the world's largest airline alliance, NEC Corporation and SITA. The agreement announced today is aimed at accelerating the availability of biometric self-service touchpoints across Star Alliance's member airlines while delivering a faster, touchless airport experience.

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Connecting to SITA's Smart Path solution, the Star Alliance biometrics platform will be able to use SITA's shared airport infrastructure already available in more than 460 airports. Together with SITA and NEC's global presence, multiple biometric projects can be delivered in parallel, speeding up the availability of biometric passenger processing to Star Alliance's member airlines globally. This will be vital in enabling Star Alliance to deploy biometrics faster.

A further advantage is the NEC I:Delight platform – which allows passengers who have opted to use the service to be identified quickly and with a high degree of accuracy, even on the move – can be easily integrated with SITA Smart Path. The I:Delight platform is also able to recognize passengers even when wearing a mask, an increasingly important feature for travel during the current pandemic. The platform is already in use by Star Alliance member airlines at several airports in Europe.

Uniquely, passengers using Star Alliance's biometrics platform enroll only once. Passengers then can pass through biometrically enabled touchpoints across multiple member airlines and participating airports using just their face as their boarding pass. This speeds up the passage through the airport while making each step completely touchless, supporting important health and hygiene safety measures in times of COVID-19 and delivering on Star Alliance's vision of a seamless customer experience.

Jeffrey Goh, CEO, Star Alliance, said: "This agreement is instrumental in bringing further scale to our biometrics service, with the inherent benefits of speed and meeting customer expectations for a more touchless and hygienically safer experience across all of our member airlines. Biometrics is a key element of that experience and our strategy of leading the way in digitalizing the passenger journey."

Barbara Dalibard, CEO, SITA, said: "Together with NEC, SITA is pleased to be supporting Star Alliance in bringing the full benefits of biometric identity to their member airlines. Passengers have long welcomed the advantages of control and speed automation brings to the passenger journey; a trend that has been accelerated by COVID-19. With this agreement the benefits of biometric identity will be extended from a single airline or journey to a vast network of airlines. That is truly unique and demonstrates the benefits digital identity can bring to the passenger."

Masakazu Yamashina, Executive Vice President, NEC Corporation said: "NEC is honored to join this three party partnership with Star Alliance and SITA. While the impact of COVID-19 continues, we are pleased to lead the creation of seamless and touchless travel. NEC is committed to providing a safe and comfortable customer experience through our NEC I:Delight identity management solution."

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